3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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to cook stone-boiled soup. The dried excrement (chips) of the buffalo burned slowly and made a hot and lasting fire for both warmth and cooking; it was sometimes used ceremoniously as a support to keep some sacred object from touching the ground, and it was so endowed with power that scouts swore their oaths of veracity on a pile of buffalo chips. The bones, hoofs, and horns of the buffalo were fashioned into cups, spoons, and ornaments; and the horns were occasionally fashioned into bows or worn on headdresses on special occasions. Sinews from the back made bow strings and thread. Ropes were made from the twisted hair. The hide was used to manufacture clothing, lodge coverings, thongs, saddles, bridles, and bags. When properly finished with the fine coat of wool and the hair left on it, it provided an unusually warm robe. Freed from the hair and dressed, it constituted a summer blanket. A green hide served for a pot before the white traders brought kettles, and braided strands of rawhide provided an excellent rope.

There was a time, according to Comanche legend, when the Indians did not have access to the buffalo. In the version recorded fifty years ago by H. H. St.Clair, Coyote effected their release by a ruse.[33] In a hitherto unpublished version given by That's It in 1933 it was *Ka:wus,* the Culture Hero, who turned the trick.

« « « Our knowledge only goes to the point where man and the earth were already here.

The People were out playing three kinds of games one day—the wheel game, throwing arrows, and shooting with the bow. A strange man came amongst them. He talked to no one. Just stood there looking on with a quiver over his shoulder.

After a while he said, "I'll go over there to defecate." He laid down his quiver and jumped in a creek. While he was down there, a young man went up and looked in his bag. There was a nice piece of fat in it. He took it up and showed it to the other Indians. They all wondered where that old man came from. "He certainly has plenty of meat," they all said.

Then they all plotted to stop playing at meal time. They left the

[33] H. H. St. Clair, "Shoshone and Comanche Tales," *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* No. 85 (July–September, 1909), 280–81.

3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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of flour or other supplies while the man came out unencumbered. Moreover, in the way of home industry there was indeed little for the men to do. The Comanches did not work at such specifically masculine crafts as metallurgy and wood-carving. Pottery, basketry, and weaving were unknown.

It was the woman's business to prepare the food, clothing, and shelter, and to care for the children. She made the household articles and bags, brought the wood and water, attended to packing and unpacking on moving day, and helped with making the horse equipage. She followed closely behind the hunter with pack animal and knife, skinned the animals, packed the hides to camp, and by slow, tedious processes converted them into clothing, tipi covering, bags, and other articles.

Hides were prepared differently according to whether they were to be worked into leather or made into rawhide bags. Some skins were tanned on one side only, others on both. The process was not identical for buffalo and deer skins, leather might or might not be smoked, and there were variations due to individual technique in workmanship. White influence affected the implements and technique, so that full details concerning the historic process can no longer be recovered. The essentials of tanning, however, are clear enough. To remove the hair, the skin was soaked on the hair side with a mixture of wood ashes and water, which produces lye. Lime, which was obtained from burned rock, was sometimes used in place of ashes. After the hide was sufficiently soaked, the hair side was scraped against the grain. Some women chose to shave off the hair without previously soaking the hide.

There were various kinds of scrapers. A scraper might be an oval, flat flake of flint chipped down so as to have a rather sharp and even edge all around, and it varied in size, some scrapers being large enough to use in both hands. Buffalo bones were often employed, and after the appearance of the white man, metal scrapers became common. Whether or not the hair was removed, a long and tedious process was required to tan the hide. The essential operations were the preparation of the hide, the application of the tanning mixture, and the subsequent working of the hide to make it soft and pliable.

The green hide, according to the whim of the individual worker,

20: Wallace H-4,5 (1945) 1953 NO6 Comanche NO6

each "deserving" headman received a small herd. The Comanches soon discovered that they did not care for lamb chops or mutton stew, and there was not one who knew how to weave a rug or cared to learn. Boys chased the animals on the prairie and shot them with bow and arrow. The severe winter that followed took a heavy toll.[20] Camp dogs, wolves, and coyotes got what was left. More sheep were issued in 1878 but most of these died for lack of proper care. The wool could not be marketed satisfactorily, sheep required much care, and the Comanches disliked sheep so much that the plan to make sheepherders of them was abandoned.

MacKenzie had issued the Indians a few cattle. It would have been better had he purchased cattle with the money he spent for sheep and goats. The Comanches appreciated cattle. The transition from buffalo hunters and horse herders to cattlemen would have been relatively easy. But the obstacles were too great. The white cattlemen of the area, wanting the grass and opposed to competition, supported the government's policy of making farmers of the Indians. Cattle required considerable capital investment and the Comanches had no money. When the subsistence allowance of three dollars a month was inadequate or the supplies late in arriving, the Indians ate the stocker cattle acquired by government issue or by purchase. Nevertheless, a few Comanches did obtain herds. Tabanica, who lived four miles north, and Quanah Parker, twenty miles west of Fort Sill, were the first to have herds of their own.

Most of the agents adhered to the government policy of making farmers of the Indians. Since the country along the Washita River appears to be more suitable for agriculture than that in the vicinity of Fort Sill, the Fort Sill and Wichita agencies were consolidated in September, 1878, and placed on the south bank of the Washita at the present site of the small city of Anadarko. The Indian Office then instructed Agent P. B. Hunt to have all the Indians begin farming.

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20. Agent J. M. Haworth, Annual Report, 1875 and 1876, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1875, 273, and 1876, 52.

167: Peters T-5 (1843) 1877 NT13 Navaho NT13
Comanche NO6

stantly on the alert for evil, and yet, possessing great skill in the more peaceful and benevolent habits of the herdsman and shepherd.

The depredations of the immense number of sheep, almost daily chronicled in our gazettes, are not made to appease hunger only; but to add to the already immense flocks that overspread, as I have been told by them, the region of country lying west of the Sierra Madre, and east of California.

In the spring and summer of 1843, in company with an old friend — one of the Creeks who had emigrated west of the Mississippi, soon after the treaty with them in 1832 — I traveled westward. My guide and companion had acquired a good knowledge of the language and habits of the Camanches, Navajoes and Apaches, and had probably not altogether abstained from joining them occasionally in their irruptions upon the settlements of their timid neighbors of Chihuahua and Sonoro. I found him "as one having authority," and of course, very useful, both in the protection he afforded me, and the information he enabled me to acquire.

Among the first objects of interest to me, next to the matchless feats of horsemanship they perform, and which have so often been written of — was the number and variety of articles wrought by them, both useful and ornamental, and which might well vie with the skill of more civilized artizans. Among these were the beautiful fabrics composed of wool, and a kind of grass cloth, and some few of cotton. The object, however, of greatest interest to me, was the art of imparting to wool, etc., the beautiful colors I had often before admired, and to this I gave most attention. Like other Indians, I found them unwilling to impart knowledge voluntarily, and I had in my previous and long intercourse with the western tribes, early learned not to make inquiries that might excite their special attention to my designs. Our Indians are not disposed to impart to their white brethren, unless their citizens, any thing that might be useful out of their own country, in which particular, they are not unlike the Chinese, so that with the exceptions of their modes of dyeing and spinning, I will not now attempt to give you any certain account. The information

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rain or pure river water: the point is stopped, and the water allowed to remain on the ashes for a day and night, and then permitted to drip into the vessel placed to catch the ley.

This ley is a little colored, and is clarified by the same process of filtration through clean white sand, or sand that has been used for the same purpose before — when clarified, the ley is used as before stated, and especially to set the colors, which seems to be the principal use of it. It has no caustic quality after filtration, but an astringency peculiar to itself — rather a pungent than burning quality. It is sometimes used to dilute the darker dyes and produce lighter shades.

The wool to be dyed is washed in warm water until perfectly cleansed of the natural oil — using the root of a plant very abundant in Texas and southern New Mexico, as well as most of the southern states, of a very saponaceous quality, and known as the soap plant. In all their best fabrics — blankets, belts, leggings, etc., made of wool, their finest fleeces are used, and it is not unknown to many of our army officers and others, that the Navajoes give great attention to their management of sheep, and often produce fleeces almost or quite equal to the merino in fineness and softness of texture, by their skilful crosses and selections made after long and minute observations and care. A Camanche and Navajoe are as much delighted with the possession of a superior ram and ewe as of a fine horse, to the breeding of which they also give much attention. Von Thaer would not be more so with the possession of his finest buck. All their wool is dyed before spinning, and this is done by submerging it in the dye and letting it remain ten or fifteen days, the dye-pot being left covered: but during this soaking the wool is turned over once every day. Sometimes the lighter shades are imparted to the wool by soaking a shorter time — they say this produces a clearer tint. If not dark enough, the same process is repeated with fresh dye. I have been told by my guide, that the Camanches fumigate the wool after dying, over a smoke of the above described wood, to deepen the color, but I never saw it done.

Their green color is produced from the leaves of several plants, the juice of which is expressed in the same manner as from the flowers, and used in the same manner.

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N 283 401 to be about three feet long. The branch is trimmed off to fit the holes, and constitutes the spindle. The limb is used as the handle, and as a fly to continue the momentum. The whole apparatus is unique, simple and efficient, and I would say an original one. (See section *S*, where *a*, *a*, is the spindle, *b*, *b*, the boards, and *c*, a pin to keep the spindle in its place.)

The spinning is commenced like the first process, by twisting with the fingers a short thread, then fastening it to the point of the spindle. The spinner has already prepared, by picking with her fingers, a quantity of wool which she has in her basket or bag, tied around her waist, or in a bundle like the one described in the previous process. A person twirls around the handle or fly (see *d*), and the spinner keeps moving backwards, as the thread is formed. The process is much the same as that by which our rope makers spin hemp by hand. A thread of six or eight feet in length, is spun before being wound up.

C N 283 The Indian never spins until he or she has a specific work to perform. The size, plan, configuration, and every other requisite, is first determined. The quantity of thread required for any piece of work, is from long habit, pretty accurately known. I think I have said already, that all their weaving is done with a double and twisted thread. They waste no thread. They usually spin a small quantity and weave, and then spin again, and so on, until the work is completed. The process is the same for cotton, wool, grass, etc.

C N 286 Weaving is the most elaborate of their arts, and they make beautiful work. Their blankets, or I should call them shawls, are often rich, strong and showy. Some have a resemblance to the Persian shawl. They frequently sell in Mexico for three hundred dollars, and I have seen them sell in New Orleans for two hundred dollars. I have one in my possession, taken by Gen. Houston at the battle of San Jacinto, which cost three hundred dollars. They are usually impervious to water, very heavy, and are rather plaited together than woven. The time occupied in making one of these, is from four to six, and sometimes eight months.

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